CDPHE Guide for Inclusive Hiring Practices

CDPHE's Mission

The purpose of the CDPHE Hiring Guide is to promote inclusive hiring practices that strengthen and diversify applicant pools. This aligns with the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Standards for the recruitment of individuals who reflect the population served (which may include race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, and/or other lived experience) reflected in the following statement that is included in all CDPHE job postings, *"We are committed to increasing the diversity of our staff and providing culturally responsive programs and services. Therefore, we encourage responses from people of diverse backgrounds and abilities."*

Throughout the hiring process, there are several windows of opportunity to implement strategies that will increase the strength and diversity of our applicant pools. Please keep in mind that this serves as a guide; please work with your Human Resources Consultant during the recruitment and selection process.

Here are four opportunities to consider:

Opportunity #1: Creating and/or updating the position description:

Integrate an understanding of health/environmental equity principles into the position description.

- Add a statement of commitment to equity and inclusion into the "General Information Section" of the position description. Some examples include:
  - "We believe that all people - no matter their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, education level, age, language, religion, ability or geographic location - should have the opportunity to live healthy lives."
  - "We work to eliminate health and environmental disparities through our program by <insert program objective>."
  - "We work to ensure that all of Colorado's <insert population pertaining to role> have an equal opportunity to achieve their full health/environmental potential."
  - Or develop something that your branch stands for around equity.
- Incorporate equity principles into the job duties and/or the problem/resolution sections of the position description. Examples include:
  - Address the needs of diverse customers; understand and respond in a culturally responsive way.
  - Create efficiencies in CDPHE administrative and programmatic processes that reduce barriers experienced by external partners/grantees and that compromise their ability to reduce health/environment inequities.

- - Engage stakeholders and the communities who are most affected by <insert health issue> in the planning, implementation and evaluation processes.
    - Identify which social determinants of health/environment and/or root causes are leading to the disparities. Then, select one to address and incorporate it into an action plan.
    - Develop partnerships with other relevant sectors (e.g. transportation, housing, higher ed) to address <insert health/environmental issue> and work to address causes of health/environmental inequities.
    - Conduct a policies and practice review using an [equity review tool](#) to ensure policies are not inadvertently supporting disparities. Refer to the Office of Health Equity's compilation of [Sweet Tools to Advance Equity](#).
    - Use data to identify health/environmental inequities and their root causes and use these data to educate and inform programmatic/policy decisions.
    - Reframe or create new evaluation methods/questions to better understand our effect on health/environmental inequities.
    - Determine and implement actions needed to improve or enhance performance monitoring, quality improvement activities and evaluation plans to understand the effects on health/environmental inequities.
    - Use plain and clear language that can be understood by a broad array of stakeholders, partners, and community members in all communications.
  - Think about PD requirements and barriers that may limit populations:
    - Conditions of Employment
      - Example: Requiring a driver's license may inadvertently screen out those with mobile disabilities.
    - Physical and Mental Attributes
      - Being thoughtful about physical, mental, environmental attributes needed for the position. What is required for the position and does any attributes create barriers?
    - Targeted Classification
      - Consider hiring someone at a lower level (Administrator I versus Administrator III) and growing the person into the position. Starting at a higher level can screen out non-college students, veterans, and/or individuals making a career change later in life.

Opportunity #2: Determining the qualifications and recruiting strategy:

Determine the education and/or experience to attract a broader array of backgrounds and perspectives into the applicant pool. Expand the scope of relevant education and/or experience to attract a broader array of backgrounds and perspectives into the applicant pool and reducing barriers within the language.

Seek to reach a broader audience through avenues beyond Co.Jobs and/or your typical networks. Also, identify and reduce barriers that limit the diversity in the candidate pools.

- Include a supplemental question related to health/environmental equity and inclusion in the job application.
- When developing supplemental questions, work with your HR consultant to review Menu of Interview Questions.
  - Please make sure to review all questions for the recruitment process beforehand with your HR Consultant.
- Identify a variety of sources where posting can be shared.
- Identifying what is important for the position; that is, does the position require specific technical experience or general skills/competencies from any degree (e.g., written communication skills).
- Expanding experience to be more broad when applicable.
- Proving equal weight for experience as a substitute for education.
- Include a variety of educational credentials (including and beyond common degrees) under the Minimum Qualifications.
- Consider that skills or competencies are needed with the degree.
- Use the opportunity to substitute the number of years experience for a specific degree
  - For example, the minimum qualifications may be graduation from an accredited college or university and 5 years of experience. You may substitute the bachelor's degree with "professional work experience (as described in the minimum qualifications) which provided the same kind, amount and level of knowledge acquired in the required education."
- Use plain language:
  - [Writing Resources](#) (Plain Language Thesaurus, Federal Plain Language Guidelines).
- Avoid jargon, acronyms, and overly-complex information.
- Provide information that sparks interest and highlights benefits of working at CDPHE.
  - Examples: Employee Resource Groups, Competitive Benefits, Mentoring, etc.
- Being thoughtful about number of supplemental questions; too many questions on top of cover letter, resume and application can be very taxing on the candidate.
- Consider different avenues for HR to post the position:
  - Facebook: Coming Soon! Details being finalized;
  - College websites (HR has local state university accounts);
  - Career pages;
  - Professional organizations;
  - Andrew Hudson's List;
  - Indeed (will automatically pick up many of the State postings;)
  - Newspapers specific to position/location.
- Supervisors and their network should share the job announcement with a network of diverse community partners. It's helpful to create and continue to expand your contact list of partners.
  - Include your colleagues from the Office of Health Equity on your list! Here's a [template](#) you can use to maintain your distribution list or create a distribution list in your Google contacts for sharing job announcements.

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○ Think professional organizations, local organizations/groups.

Opportunity #3: Creating an inclusive interview process:
Ask questions that will elicit the applicant's experience and perspective.

- Speak with your HR Consultant to review the Menu of Interview Questions.
- Refer to the [Hiring Resources](#).
- Recruit subject matter experts (SMEs) with diverse experience and perspectives (this may include diversity of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and/or other lived experience) to review applications and/or serve on interview panels. If appropriate, consider including partners from outside your work unit and division on your interview panels (discuss with your HR Consultant). Your interview panel says a lot about your program/organization and how inclusive the work environment may be.
- Before and after interviewing people in your applicant pool, have a conversation about the work-related skills, attributes, and experience of each applicant that would both diversify and complement your current team.
- Build in extra time to debrief on each candidate and what s/he brings to the organization in regards to talent, experience, and perspective:
  a. Be creative in identifying ways that can reduce chances of implicit biases influencing decisions. Examples include:
     i. Blind Interviews (Speak with your HR Consultant);
     ii. Removal of names from applications (Speak with your HR Consultant);
     iii. Select a person or two who will be responsible for challenging the opinions of others to determine if biases are at play;
     iv. Discuss how differences can be at play in the interview process (e.g., acknowledging that there are different cultural styles that affect communication and that communication styles may be different than your own or what you're used to).
- Create a welcoming environment during the interview. You want people leaving the interview understanding that CDPHE is inclusive of diverse experiences and perspectives, is committed to reducing health inequities in the state, and that we believe that every single employee has a role in this work.
  a. Create a welcoming interview by:
     i. Having an individual to greet the candidate upon their arrival;
     ii. Having water available;
     iii. Provide introductions to all team members;
     iv. Provide an organizational chart with positions (titles only--no names);
     v. No texting, emailing, or other distractions in the interview.
- Reference checks:
  a. Supervisors must review all current State employee files.
  b. Be creative; If an individual does not have an extensive work history, ask if there is a reference from an internship, practicum, research project, or any volunteer/community work.

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Opportunity #4: On-boarding your new employee:
Intentionally devote time and effort into setting your new employee up for success right from the start.

There are many resources available related to engaging diverse and talented employees, but here are a few tips to consider:
- Use the HR on-boarding checklist.
- Familiarize new employees with the job and team/program and the Department's/Division's culture.
- Create agenda for employee for the first week.
- Be available for your hire's first week and create time in schedule to answer questions.
- Communicate opportunities for growth and advancement (e.g. professional development, mentoring program, involvement in projects that align with or develop interest areas).
- Set up new-hire buddy with someone beyond the employee's supervisor who can provide additional support to the employee in their new role.
- Support participation in an CDPHE employee resource group(s) for new employees to learn about the organization, build relationships, and share interests.
  - Employee resource groups in the Department:
    - EnRGy for young professionals;
    - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans Employee Resource Group (LGBT);
    - Multi-Cultural Employee Resource Group (MERG);
    - Women's League;
    - Health and Environmental Leadership Mission (HELM);
    - Employee Council.
- Support new employees by linking them with existing resources about health equity and community engagement and training.

Conclusion

Recruitment and onboarding is only the beginning of building an all inclusive workforce. When recruiting and retaining employees, think about how you can advance the experience for the individual at CDPHE. Engage and maximize the employee's experience through professional development, performance management, and continuous feedback.

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Resources

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Human Resources Hiring Intranet Page

Technical Guidance - Hiring Guide for Managers of the State of Colorado Personnel System, Prepared by the Department of Human Resources in the Department of Personnel & Administration, January 2014